Neglected Arabia

Missionary News and Letters

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NEGLECTED ARABIA.

October - December, 1909.

"Who Follows in Their Train?"

Mr. Calverley was born in Philadelphia, and received his early education in the public schools of that city. He is a graduate of Princeton Universtiy, 1906, and of the Princeton Theological Seminary, 1909. His affiliations have always been with the Presbyterian Church, under whose auspices he has done student summer work. He has also been a Field Worker in connection with the Pennsylvania State Sunday School Association. Mr. Calverley's support on the mission field has been assumed by the Reformed Church of Flushing, N. Y.

Rev. Edwin Ellictt Calverley, M.A.

Mrs. Calverley's early home was in Woodstock, N. J. She received, however, a good part of her education in the public schools of New Haven, Conn. She graduated in medicine at the Woman's Medical College, Philadelphia, 1908, where she was subsequently Assistant Demonstrator in anatomy. Her relations have been with the Methodist Episcopal Church and her activities in connection with the Y. W. C. A. and as director of children's meetings in the Summit Grove Camp Meeting during several years. Mrs. Calverley is also to be maintained on the mission field as a representative of the Reformed Church of Flushing, N. Y.

Mrs. Eleanor Taylor Calverley, M.D.

Dr. Harrison was born in Nebraska, where he received his secondary and collegiate education. He was a student of Doane College and of the University of Nebraska, at the latter of which he received his Bachelor's Degree in 1905. In 1908 he graduated in medicine at Johns Hopkins University. For the last two years he has been a House Physician in the Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston. Dr. Harrison's church affiliations have been with the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations. His support in the mission field has been assumed by Trinity Church, Plainfield, N. J.

Dr. Paul Wilberforce Harrison.

Dr. Anna Christine Iverson.

Dr. Iverson was born in Denmark, and came to this country with her parents when a child, and has since resided with them in Dakota. She was educated in the Academy and College at Yankton, South Dakota, and later graduated in medicine at the University of Michigan in 1907. During the last two years she has been Interne and Assistant Physician at the State Hospital for the Insane at Kalamazoo, Mich. Dr. Iverson's relations have been with the Lutheran and Congregational Churches. Her support in Arabia has been undertaken by the Reformed Church of Ridgewood, N. J.

Miss Dorothy Firman, M.A.

Miss Firman's early home was in Wakefield, Mass., but she removed later with her parents to Chicago, where she attended the Oak Park High School. She graduated from Mount Holyoke, 1906, and later pursued a post-graduate course at Wellesley College, receiving the degree of M. A. in 1908. Since her graduation she has been Instructor in English Literature in Carleton College, Minn. Miss Firman's affiliations have been with the Congregational Church, in which connection she has engaged in City Mission work at different times for several years.

"An Hundred-Fold."

Mark x., 29-30.

I thank Thee for the endless life
That Thou hast promised me,
If from my home and kin and land
I go to follow Thee.
I thank Thee for the shining goal
That marks the distant day;
But much, dear Lord, for "in this time,"
Fellowship by the way.

The world to come I know not, Lord,
Save for Thy blessed face;
The "hundred-fold" of human love
Is warm and present grace.
That far-off Heaven comes close to me,
While pilgrim to Thy land,
In this dear comfort by the way—
To touch my brother's hand.

Dorothy Firman.

A Call for Intercession.

Were it not for the mighty volume of prayer continually ascending to the Lord of the Harvest, the laborers would indeed be laboring in vain in all the mission fields. How beautiful, how encouraging is the thought that the prayers of God's people never cease.

"We thank Thee that Thy Church unsleeping,
While earth rolls onward into light,
Through all the world her watch is keeping,
And rests not now by day or night.
As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the strain of praise away."

We desire not so much to stir up to prayer generally as to make known some of our needs, so that prayer may be more definite. The heathen or Moslem heart does not yield to might or power, but only to the Spirit Himself, and it is ours to pray for the manifestation of the Spirit in the hearts that are still unyielding.

But there are some, yes many, whose hearts have in a measure yielded and who are beginning to be obedient unto the faith. Only God knows how many there are scattered abroad in this land who are yearning for His salvation, who have heard the invitation and would come if it were not for almost insurmountable obstacles. Pray for these, that they may be taught, guided, and strengthened by the Spirit and the Word till they confess Him boldly. How sad, how unutterably sad it is to see such a man, who has had glimpses of the light, sink back into darkness denser than before.

While we thank God for the few who have come out of darkness into light, let us not forget to pray for them. How imperfectly they see, and how falteringly they walk, and if ever they slip or stumble all the world stands ready to point at them the finger of scorn and say, Are these your Christians? Thanks be to God; He is able to keep them that are His.

Very closely connected with the burden of converts is the burden of our faithful helpers. These are men born and bred under the influences of the Oriental churches. Their surroundings are not conducive to a liberal mind and breath of sympathy. Our prayers should be for them that they may more and more become salt and light to those about them.

In a certain prayer cycle we find, among others, the following request: "Prayer for the White Residents in the West Indies, that they may honor God among the Negroes." Did it ever occur to the church

at home to pray for the White Residents of the Persian Gulf, that they, too, may honor God among the Moslems? Surely the Gulf needs it as much as the West Indies, and "White Residents" does not exclude missionaries. They also stand in need of much fervent prayer, both on their own part, and on the part of the church at home. Sometimes the missionary unwittingly allows his daily walk and conversation to minimize if not to nullify the effect of his teaching and preaching. No one is watched so closely as the missionary, and of him it may truly be said, "What he does speaks so loud that men do not hear what he says." Nor is it enough for the missionary, that his conduct does not obstruct the work of grace about him, but he may not rest till he can make the words of Paul his own, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." "Brethren, pray for us." We need your prayers day by day, and hour by hour.

D. Dykstra.

Everyday Life in Bahrein.

It is interesting to observe everyday life in this little town of Manamah—which, being interpreted, is a sleeping place—here among the Pearl Islands of the Persian Gulf. One finds a strange mingling of Western and Oriental ideas and commodities. In the "sook" (bazaar) a patent meat-grinder may be hanging up beside a square soft woolen shawl which is used as a native headdress. You can purchase patent pills and medicines from the United States, so that even in this secluded corner of the earth the physician must compete with the cut-rate drug store; and the sick man as at home may buy a wonderful cure consisting of a little bitters and poor alcohol, come to the hospital, or, if he wishes to be thoroughly up to date, take a native remedy in the shape of an inky drink from the washings of freshly written portions out of the Koran.

The ways of the foreigners are past finding out to these simple people and the windmill on the mission compound affords an ever-present attraction to visitors from the interior. Every day some one can be seen gazing intently at it from the road.

The Koran forbids pictures, but Mohammed never thought of the looking glass, much to the delight of the Arabs who have visited Bombay. Mirrors of all shapes and sizes adorn the walls of the best room of his home. Calling a short while ago, I counted eight large, beside several smaller, ones. They certainly would be delighted were they to sit down in an American ice-cream parlor of the glass-wall variety. Are we so different from our brothers of a darker hue?

The Indian Government has an official meteorological station here, so that when the first newspaper in Bahrein is published one important item, the weather man's report, will be on hand, which might read somewhat as follows:

Menamah and Vicinity—July 14, 1909.

Continued fair. Light northerly winds.

Maximum temperature to-day, dry, 92 deg.; July 14, 1908, 94 deg.

Maximum temperature to-day, wet, 90 deg.; July 14, 1908, 90 deg.

The weather prophet predicts a final drop in the wind by to-morrow night which will last for three months with an occasional zephyr.

When the breezes cease and the wet bulb thermometer stands nearly equal to the dry, it means that the native water coolers are worthless, since their refrigerating properties depend upon evaporation. These coolers consist of porous earthenware bottles which are set out or hung up in the breeze, so that dry wind, even though the temperature be 107 degrees, means cool drinking water. Alas, that in the hot months the breezes are so capricious. An enterprising Indian has undertaken to make ice on a small scale and occasionally we get a pound for dinner, sending our own servant to the bazaar to bring it wrapped in a thick cloth. It is a great luxury, for were you to buy the 25-pound cakes you use in the homeland at the same rate you would pay three dollars a cake. But a pound is quite sufficient to give us each a deliciously cold drink. When the sample of "thelg" (snow), as they call it, came and we told our little Persian boy to touch it and it would burn, his eyes grew big, but he soon admitted that we were right.

BAHREIN REFRIGERATOR.

The servant problem is not confined to the United States, and the varieties of languages spoken are certainly rather numerous. You speak in Arabic to the Persion cook, who is taking the place of your own, who is ill, and ask if he can make dessert, and he answers, "Brown pudding?" And so it goes, this strange mixture of occident and orient. When the telephone rings in the middle of the night and the doctor must go down and answer it, and then to the hospital because a patient is suddenly worse, or a neighbor's phonograph keeps you awake, you feel quite at home; but when the strange wild song of a man strolling along by the wall is heard, or the continuous chanting of the worshippers in the mosque, "There is no god but Allah. There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet," you realize that your home is indeed in the regions beyond, and the people here have a zeal for

God, but not according to knowledge. Or when a call comes at noon on a hot summer day for the doctor to go miles over the desert on the back of a donkey, and he gets thirsty yet dares not drink any water because he is not sure it is safe, there is not much difficulty in locating one's precise geographical position. Of course, no such trip falls to my lot this year, for these are the days of language study.

Soda-lemonade has also found its way to this odd little town, and the boys can be heard calling, "Nemolade, nemolade, nemolade bard," not unlike our "poiper," which would hardly be intelligible to one acquainted with book English only. There are two varieties, one of a pink color which retails at two cents, and a cheaper at a penny per bottle. The town now supports three manufactories of these beverages; and, to judge from the amount seen everywhere in the bazaar these hot summer days, a thriving business is done by all of them. With the little fellow who is selling the bright-colored bottles it is always, "Nemolade bard (cold)," even though he has been walking about in the sun with it for half the day.

THYRA H. JOSSELYN.

Bahrein Hospital Notes.

The medical work in Bahrein has gone along its accustomed lines this year. As much of the work would make dull and monotonous reading for the subscribers to NEGLECTED ARABIA, I shall merely select a few interesting cases.

The first one is a woman—she has fallen off the roof and has cut her hip so badly that four or five stitches are necessary—she gives permission for this to be done, and even consents to stay in the hospital for a few days, for she is badly hurt and needs attention. We feel rather pleased that we have persuaded her to stay with us, so seldom will the women tolerate such a thing, but we rejoice too soon. In the afternoon two women come over to see her, and so work upon her with their arguments that at the first opportunity she slips out and runs away. Alas! she never came back even to the dispensary, and I fear the stitches being left in place indefinitely did more harm than good.

The second case is a man who was sent me by the heir to the reigning Sheikh. He has cancer of the foot, but does not want amputation—indeed there would be a good deal of risk in amputating, for he is a man getting on in years. For two months he stayed with us, and though we were not able to benefit him much physically he learned to know a great deal of the truths of the Gospel, spending much of his

time reading both Old and New Testament. He and Mr. Moerdyk became great friends, and only eternity will reveal the extent of the work done in his heart. We pray that he may never trust again in Islam, in spite of all the pressure that will surely be brought to bear upon him should he show any signs of leaning towards Christianity. He is a member of the young Sheikh's suite and a great favorite with the Sheikh. May God keep him.

The third case I think of is a little boy about six years old, who is the victim of ignorance and quackery. Some weeks ago our hospital dresser met a friend in the bazaar who told him that his son had fallen and broken a leg. Our dresser immediately advised him to bring the boy to the hospital, but was told: "No, they had bone setters in the town; God was merciful, and if He willed it would get well." The result was the old story. A splint was applied and bound so tightly that circulation was interfered with, gangrene set in, and the leg dropped off at the point of fracture. In this condition they brought him to us, in no condition for an operation, weak and thin from pain and infection. By keeping him for awhile we were able to bring up his strength and vitality to such an extent that he scarcely felt the shock of the operation. He is still with us, and we hope to be able to discharge him soon with a good useful stump. He has altered a great deal since we first took him in. At that time he would have nothing to do with me, but thrust me away with his hands every time I approached him. Now we are good friends, and I think in his own boyish way he loves me—I am sure we love him.

Another case was a very sad one—that of a man who fell off a steamer into an open boat and broke his back. We did all we could for him, but he only lived eighteen days and died quietly one Sunday afternoon, having never once uttered a word of complaint—in fact, only half an hour before he died, on my asking him how he was, he replied, "Quite well, if God will."

Still another is the case of a man who was shot through the thigh —the affair took place some thirty miles inland from Bunder Abbas, a town on the Persian coast. To this town the injured man was first taken, filthy native dressings being applied to the wound, so that when the Quarantine Doctor in Bunder Abbas took him, his leg was already badly infected. On gangrene setting in, and there being no facilities for doing a big amputation in Bunder Abbas, the Doctor sent him on to us. He reached Bahrein late one evening and we immediately made plans to operate, but over night he took a bad turn for the worse, developed pneumonia, and died within thirty-six hours of admission to the hospital.

Yet another case was that of a jolly old prosperous looking

Bedouin chief, who makes his living chiefly by taking what does not belong to him by means of raids. Some fifteen years ago he received a bullet wound in the thigh and, though everything healed up, he had never been able to bend his thigh. The bullet was still in his thigh, and he thought that if it were removed he would have no more trouble. I told him that such a result would not necessarily follow, but that we would take the bullet out if he wished. He wished, so we operated, removing the bullet, which was embedded in a sac of pus. Everything went well, and the old fellow himself regarded the entire proceedings as a big joke.

One more, and I have done. This is an old Bedouin from the mainland who came to me in the spring with cataract in both eyes. I operated on the best eye, but the man was a most troublesome patient, was always pulling at the dressings and finally ran away, saying that we had ruined his eye. I almost feared we had, but as a matter of fact everything healed up perfectly, and two or three days ago he reappeared, saying that he wanted me to operate on the other eye.

So much for a few samples of our in-patient work, interesting in the extreme, even if a bit anxious at times. The dozens of common everyday coughs and cold, rheumatisms and fevers, may be monotonous, but they form the backbone of all our hospital work.

And when one is tempted to weary a little of seemingly less important work, one is reminded of the lines of the good old hymn:

The daily round, the common task,
Will furnish all we need to ask,
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

C. Stanley G. Mylrea.

MISSION HOUSE. CHAPEL, SCHOOL, HOSPITAL.

MISSION BUILDINGS AT BAHREIN.

A Story of Beginnings.

(From an article in *The Missionary Review of the World*, October, 1909.)

By Rev. James Cantine, D.D., Muscat, Arabia.

It is somewhat of a distinction to be an Arabian missionary of twenty years' standing, and it may emphasize the late date of the beginning of mission work in Arabia to say that, to the writer's knowledge, no other can yet look back over twenty years of continuous service in the land of the Arabs. There were other missions which entered Arabia before 1889, notably the Church of England at Bagdad, in the northeast (1882), and the Free Church of Scotland at Aden, in the southwest (1885), but none of their first missionaries are still on the field.

In those first years, we scarcely dared to hope for a long residence in this, "a land that devoureth the inhabitants thereof." Again and again, heat and fever took workers from our ranks, until, at the end of ten years, scarcely more than half the number of men sent out remained. Some in the home land called on us to halt, but the fact that our organization was semi-independent made it possible for us to appeal widely and directly for re-enforcements. Those whom no danger could deter came in increasing numbers, so that we soon passed beyond that deadly zone of isolation and overwork which hems in so many small organizations. Years have also brought experience, and increasing income has made possible more healthful surroundings, until now our missionaries can reasonably expect far more than two decades of service.

These twenty years may be divided into three periods—those of locating, establishing, and developing our work. The first period represents the time and effort spent in deciding upon our field. Its importance is not likely to be overestimated. Many a colonizing enterprise, and missions are surely that, has been doomed to failure because of a wrong location. The Arabian Mission was fortunate in having as its founder one who knew the "Nearer East" and could introduce us to many of the workers there. Our first year was spent in language study and investigation among the missionaries of the Syria Mission of the Presbyterian Church. The knowledge we carried away, not only of the Arabic, but of their tried and proved methods of meeting the general problems of Christian work in a Moslem country, was invaluable, and probably saved us from many disastrous mistakes. Our first native associate and helper, Kamil Abdul Messiah, was a convert from Beirut, and from the mission press of that city we took and are still taking our most effective weapon, the printed word of God.

Within two years, we had seen almost the entire circumference of the Arabian peninsula. We had considered the possibility of Aleppo at the northwest corner, of the Hauran south of Damascus, and of Moab east of the Dead Sea. At Aden, we spent a few months. The ports of the Red Sea on the west were visited, and those of the Arabian Sea on the south, together with the inland towns of Yemen. Finally, we sailed along the eastern shore from Muscat to Bagdad—a total distance of nearly five thousand miles.

Our faith in the future growth of this work led us to wish for an unconstricted field. Our call to do pioneer work for Mohammedans led us to seek a population wholly such. The eastern coast of Arabia seemed best to fulfil these conditions, and there no mission had ever located, or seemed likely to locate, its men. Communication from the outside world was excellent, and the preponderance of British influence in the Persian Gulf gave promise of safety and a settled government. The repressive Turkish rule extended but a short way south along the eastern coast, so that it was possible to have much uninterruptable access to the interior.

From the few large towns, Busrah was chosen as our first station. The liberal character, wealth and enterprise of its large population; its strategic position, where trade routes from north, east and west meet at the tidal waters of the mighty "River of the Arabs"; its proximity measured in long eastern units of days' travel, to the older mission fields of Bagdad, Mosul and Mardin, at the north, whence our native Christian helpers have largely been drawn—these all combined to determine our choice.

Our second year in eastern Arabia was signaled by the beginning of work at the islands of Bahrein, midway down the Persian Gulf, and the third year by the opening of Muscat, well toward the southeast corner. Thus the Mission had in this short time outlined its entire field, and this when its working force consisted of but three or four men. To so isolate them in stations distant one from the other three or more days' journey by water, and this possible only at intervals of two weeks, seemed extremely hazardous. But we felt that to rapidly increase our mission force at one point, was to still more rapidly increase suspicion and opposition, while it would also alarm the native rulers at the other two places we wished to hold. And one man, living quietly and alone, can often, before hostile forces think it worth while to combine against him, have remained long enough to establish a right of residence in those Eastern lands, where "whatever is" is taken as something that "must be." The subsequent history of our mission has justified the risks we ran.

THE MISSION HOUSE AT MUTTRA, AN OUT-STATION OF MUSCAT.

ESTABLISHING THE WORK.

The next period was that of *establishing* our work, or, as one might almost say, of defending our claim. Like many a pioneer, we faced and resisted more than one attempt to drive us off. All of our resistance was passive—it could hardly be otherwise at Busrah, where our opponent was the Turkish Government—but though passive, it was fairly intense! We have been scratched up a bit in being dragged by the Turkish police before a Turkish tribunal, and have seen the inside of a Turkish guard-house from behind a locked door. We have had a guard of soldiers before our house for days, searching us each time we came out, and only awaiting, so they said, orders from headquarters to bundle us out of the country bag and baggage—or more likely, without the baggage. With no American consul at that time near enough to be of much dependence, and not knowing how our Minister at Constantinople would balance our simple assertions of orderliness against the vivid and highly-colored complaints of the local authorities backed by petitions forced upon the different communities of the city asking that, as evil-doers and insurrectionists, we be deported, we were led to place our great trust in prayer, and in belief that He who brought us to Arabia would keep us there. Fortunately, our friends among the American missionaries in Constantinople interested themselves actively in our behalf, and our representative there would not lend himself to the misrepresentation of the Turkish Government, though he did casually send word by a passing traveler that we were causing him more trouble than all the other missionaries in Turkey. Not be-

ing able to force us out of the country, they next sought to establish a sort of boycott, especially against our renting a dwelling-house. Here providence opened a way for us through the only man in Busrah able to oppose the wish of the authorities, the Persian Consul, who gave us one of his houses to live in. This respite gave time for a bargain with a wealthy native to build for us in a very desirable part of the town. How he ever managed to have the contract and permit authorized is difficult to say, but once we were in our own house, we had some "face," and our main troubles were over.

The islands of Bahrem, where our second station is located, are governed by an Arab Sheik, himself bound by elastic but unbreakable treaty ties to the English Government. Here, for a long time, our missionary's was the only white face. By living among the Arabs in an Arab manner, with some measure of medical knowledge made full use of, by familiarizing himself with the literary and religious authorities of Islam, he was able to anchor his venture before the zealots awoke to the fact of what it meant. There was some rough work—our house was fired into at night, and threats of murder were repeatedly made. The English political resident was approached and asked if he would stand aside and allow the Americans to be driven into the sea. He replied, so he told us, that while he was not responsible for the Americans, yet the ties of kinship were pretty strong; that *our* ruler's son might marry *his* ruler's daughter, etc., and that before they did anything rash, they should take these things into account! Very vague words, and yet quite effectual! The representatives of the English Government in Arabia have, however, officially observed a strictly neutral attitude to us and our work, even going so far as to convey to Washington the information that they would not be responsible for our safety. Yet we have accounted many of them as our personal friends who have here and there, unofficially and perhaps unknowingly, been of great assistance to us.

At Muscat, the third station, our right to remain was not so keenly contested as at our other two stations. Here we found the only American consulate in all our field, and it may be for this reason that the Sultan of Muscat, an independent ruler, was never actively hostile. But it must also be remembered that the Arabs of Oman, from the Sultan down, are probably the most polite and cordial to accredited strangers of all the dwellers of Arabia. The main thing our Consul here has yet done for us, is to collect reimbursement for personal and mission property looted during an incursion of the inland tribes; a repayment, which the Mission wished to forego, but which the Consul insisted upon for the sake of the honor and prestige of the country he represented. Here at Muscat, just within the tropics, the

Arab character is perhaps more indolent and more ready to accept the inevitable, to cast the responsibility for evil conditions on the divine decree that may not be changed. One of their Koranic sayings is often used in this connection, "I take refuge with God from Satan the accurst." On one occasion, years ago, as the missionary was passing out of the audience room of the Sultan after having gained, through importunity, some little concession, his Highness was heard to use a little adaptation of the old proverb in the words, "I take refuge with God from a country that has missionaries in it!" Not very complimentary to our personnel, but very reassuring when we think of pitting our Western persistence against the Oriental inertia.

The third period of these twenty years was that of *development.* We had reached the field; we had proved that we could stay there; now what could we accomplish there? As regards the direction of our development, we held to our first intention—"Arabia and Islam." An early invitation from Bagdad at the north to take over the work of the English Mission there, would probably, if accepted, have absorbed all our efforts in that great city with its thousands of native Christians. An opportunity to assume responsibility for the Jews of Arabia, though very inviting, was refused as not being that nearest our hearts. Another to enter into the work of one of the great Bible societies was not accepted because it was deemed easier for them to get men than for us. Work among the heathen slaves brought to Arabia from Africa, though embraced and faithfully carried out, was limited through the decline of the slave-trade. Our society seemed definitely held to its first purpose of pioneer work among Moslems looking toward the interior of Arabia as its ultimate goal. This development toward the interior, though necessarily following our occupation of the coast, has been steadily carried out. Our first out-stations were a couple of hundred miles from Busrah, one on the Tigris and one on the Euphrates, and in the mountains of Oman, westward from Muscat, there is another Christian outpost. We have always prayerfully and longingly looked at the open roads inland, but only this year has our force on the coast been strong enough to justify setting aside one of our number, a doctor, for definite work among the tribes inland.

If one takes a comprehensive look back over these twenty years, it is easy to see that some things have been accomplished. Converts are enduring reproach, suffering shame, loss of property and liberty, groping after the higher ideals of Christianity, slipping backward at times, but realizing more and more the power of Christ to forgive and to save. Of as much or more promise to the future is the perceptible leavening of the whole mass of Islam with Christian principles and its uplift to a plane where future effort will meet with a more quick and

sure return. In all eastern Arabia, the dense ignorance regarding Christianity has been enlightened, inborn and traditional prejudices have been dispelled, and indifference is slowly giving place to interest and acceptance.

The indirect results of our occupation are also worth a thought. As would have been the case with Mackay, of Uganda, had he seen the answer to his plea for a strong mission in Arabia, so have the hearts of other workers in Mohammedan countries been gladdened by the knowledge of this successful assault on the very citadel of Islam. Is it hard to believe that many a thinking adherent of Islam finds his heart assailed with doubt and dismay, as he sees this land of the holy cities, the cradle of his faith, slowly being encircled by the standards of the Cross?